



## EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS – FEB 25, 2020

### TAMIL NADU

- The Tamil Nadu government - issued an order prohibiting new industrial activities under eight categories in the region under the Environment Act on February 24.
- ✓ The order has also been published in an extraordinary gazette.
- ✓ The state had recently enacted a law to declare the Cauvery delta districts and blocks of the delta a protected agricultural zone
- ✓ The ban order was issued in exercise of the powers conferred under Section 5 of the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 and the notification issued by the Union ministry of environment and forests in February 1988
- ✓ The state government cited Article 48-A of the Constitution that mandated the state to protect the environment
- ✓ The areas comprise Thanjavur, Tiruvarur and Nagapattinam, and Kattumannarkoil, Melbhuvanagiri, Keerapalayam, Parangipettai and Kumaratchi blocks of Cuddalore district, and Aranthangi, Avudaiyarkoil, Manamelkudi, Tiruvarangulam and Karambakudi blocks of Pudukottai.
- ✓ The banned industries include, zinc, copper and aluminium smelter, iron ore process plant, integrated steel plant and sponge iron plant, bone meal, processing of animal horn, hoofs and other body parts, tannery, exploration, drilling and extraction of oil and natural gas and ship breaking industry.

### NATIONAL

- US President Donald Trump and First Lady Melania Trump - arrived in Ahmedabad, Gujarat on February 24, 2020 along with daughter Ivanka Trump and son-in-law Jared Kushner.
- ✓ President Trump was welcomed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi at Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel International Airport



- ✓ Trump attended the 'Namaste Trump' event at the newly-constructed Motera Cricket Stadium in Gujarat.
- ✓ The 'Namaste Trump' event witnessed a three-hour-long cultural programme along with the interactive session of Trump with the people of Gujarat
- ✓ President Trump's Ahmedabad visit is the first leg of his two-day visit to India.
- ✓ Later, he visited Taj Mahal in Agra on February 24, 2020 and New Delhi on February 25, 2020
- ✓ Before attending the Namaste Trump event, President Trump and wife Melania visited the Sabarmati Ashram



- ✓ US First Lady Melania Trump attended a 'Happiness Class' at a government school in South Delhi on February 25, 2020.
- ✓ The US First Lady was given a traditional welcome upon her arrival at Sarvodaya Co-Ed Senior Secondary School in Nanakpura, Delhi.
- ✓ The Aam Aadmi Party Government's flagship scheme of 'Happiness Curriculum' has received accolades from across the globe for its 'uniqueness'.
- ✓ The Happiness Curriculum was launched in 2018
- ✓ It is a scheme intended to transform school education in Delhi and shift focus from only competition and marks oriented teaching and learning to cognition, language, literacy, numeracy and the arts-based learning model.
- ✓ As part of the Happiness Curriculum, students between Nursery and 8<sup>th</sup> class, have to attend a happiness period/class of 45 minutes every day
- ✓ As part of the class, students undergo meditation, value education and mental exercises.

- ✓ The course curriculum is designed to be activity-based with alternative testing or examination model.
- ✓ Students' progress in Happiness Classes is measured based on the status of happiness of the student done using a 'happiness index' without no formal written examinations and no marks system.
- ✓ The Curriculum is designed in a way that it focuses on the process rather than the outcome.
- ✓ It has been implemented in 1024 schools across Delhi, benefiting 8 lakhs students
- ✓ Later, India and the United States finalised defence deals worth \$3 billion on February 25, 2020
- ✓ As per Trump, India has agreed to purchase USD 3 billion worth advanced American military equipment including Apache and MH-60 Romeo helicopters, which are the finest in the world.
- ✓ The two key defence deals signed between India and US include –
  - ✓ Procurement of 24 MH-60 Romeo helicopters by India for \$2.6 billion.
  - ✓ Procurement of six AH-64E Apache helicopters at a cost of \$800 million.
- ✓ The helicopters built by Lockheed Martin will replace India's old fleet of British-made Sea King choppers
- ✓ Earlier, the United States had approved the sale of Apache and MH-60 Romeo helicopters in April 2019 under its Foreign Military Sales (FMS) programme.

➤ **The Union Home Ministry - has amended Arms Act, 1959 and the Arms Rules, 2016 to increase the number of firearms and ammunition kept by the Indian shooters for their practice during the year.**

- ✓ According to the new rules, international medalists and renowned shooters are now allowed to have additional weapons up to a total of twelve under the exempted category against only seven weapons allowed earlier.
- ✓ In case a shooter is renowned in one event, he will be allowed to keep a maximum of eight weapons instead of four permitted earlier.
- ✓ If he is renowned in two events then he can keep maximum ten weapons against seven approved earlier.
- ✓ If a shooter is known in more than two events, then he will now be allowed to keep a maximum of twelve firearms against earlier seven.
- ✓ For junior target shooters or aspiring shooters, it has been decided to amend the rules to allow them to possess two firearms of any category, as against one earlier.
- ✓ Also, no license will be required for Indian citizens for acquisitions and possession of small arms falling under the category of curio.
- ✓ Further, the maximum number of firearms to be possessed by any person has been reduced to two from earlier three.
- ✓ Those who have three firearms are allowed to retain any two of them and deposit the remaining firearm by December 13, 2020.

- **India - observed the first anniversary of the iconic National War Memorial on February 25, 2020**
  - ✓ As a part of the main ceremony, Chief of Defence Staff General Bipin Rawat laid wreaths and pay homage to the fallen soldiers.
  - ✓ The National War Memorial was inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who dedicated the monument to the nation on February 25, 2019
  - ✓ It consists of names of 25,942 soldiers martyred after Independence engraved on its walls
  - ✓ The National War Memorial is dedicated to war heroes who were martyred in Indo-China War in 1962, Indo-Pak Wars in 1947, 1965 and 1971, Indian Peace Keeping Force operations in Sri Lanka and the Kargil Conflict in 1999.
  - ✓ Architecturally, the National War Memorial has been in the form of four concentric circles around an obelisk.
  - ✓ The central obelisk has an 'eternal flame', representing the immortal soldier (Amar Jawan).
  - ✓ The obelisk is surrounded by four concentric circles, which represent -
    - ✓ Amar Chakra: Circle of Immortality
    - ✓ Veerta Chakra: Circle of Bravery
    - ✓ Tyag Chakra: Circle of Sacrifice
    - ✓ Rakshak Chakra: Circle of Protection
  - ✓ The memorial was built in 40 acres of land at India Gate, New Delhi.
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- **The Centre - had launched SPICe+, a web portal that integrates 10 services of various ministries and departments on February 24**
  - ✓ It was launched by the Ministry of Corporate Affairs.
  - ✓ The portal is designed to help boost Ease of Doing Business in India.
  - ✓ India ranked 63rd in Ease of Doing Business ranking published by World Bank.
  - ✓ The portal offers 10 services namely DIN allotment, issue of PAN, TAN, EPFO, ESIC registration, opening bank account for a company, allotment of GSTIN, issue
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- **Union Health Minister Harsh Vardhan - inaugurated a three day special campaign on Intensified Mission Indradhanush (IMI 2.0) on February 24.**
  - ✓ The campaign aims to immunise children under two years of age and pregnant women against vaccine-preventable diseases.
  - ✓ IMI was launched from Vadnagar in 2017 and immunization has been given a strong push in the Gram Swaraj Abhiyaan and Extended Gram Swaraj Abhiyaan
  - ✓ A more expansive version, IMI 2.0, is being carried out in 272 districts across 27 States/UTs and 650 blocks of Bihar and Uttar Pradesh across 109 districts since December 2019
  - ✓ With the launch of Intensified Mission Indradhanush 2.0, India intends to achieve the Sustainable Development Goal of ending preventable child deaths by 2030

- ✓ The Government is providing vaccines against 12 vaccines preventable diseases, nationally against 10 diseases (Diphtheria, Pertussis, Tetanus, Polio, Measles, Rubella, severe form of Childhood Tuberculosis, Rotavirus diarrhea, Hepatitis B and Meningitis & Pneumonia caused by Hemophilus Influenza type B) and sub-nationally against two diseases (Pneumococcal Pneumonia and Japanese Encephalitis)
- ✓ Out of these, Pneumococcal Conjugate vaccine is in the process of expansion while Japanese Encephalitis vaccine is provided only in the endemic districts.

## DEFENCE

- **The Indian Air Force - has been adjudged the best marching contingent among the tri services**
- ✓ The Central Industrial Security Force was ranked as the best among the Central Armed Police Forces and other auxiliary forces category in this year's Republic Day parade.
- ✓ Defence Minister Rajnath Singh presented the trophies for the best marching contingents on February 24.
  
- **The Joint military exercise between India & United Kingdom, Ajeya Warrior 2020 - concluded successfully on February 25, 2020.**
- ✓ The military training exercise was held at West down Camp, Salisbury Plains Training Area, United Kingdom
- ✓ This was the 5<sup>th</sup> edition of the exercise that aims to promote defence cooperation between the armies of India and the UK.
- ✓ The exercise commenced on February 13, 2020
- ✓ The exercise featured 120 soldiers each from the Indian and United Kingdom Army
- ✓ The soldiers had shared their experiences gained during the conduct of various counter-insurgency and counter-terrorist operations in the past.
- ✓ The exercise is conducted alternatively in the United Kingdom and India.

## SPORTS

- **The two disciplines of shooting and archery - have been included in the 2022 Commonwealth Games (CWG) edition, after being left out of the Games programme by the CWG Birmingham organizers earlier.**
- ✓ India has proposed to host two “unique” and separate Commonwealth shooting and archery championships in Chandigarh, prior to the conduct of the Games in England
- ✓ The proposal has been “unanimously” accepted by the CGF’s full Executive Board (EB) at its meeting in London which took place on February 21-23.
- ✓ This was announced by Commonwealth Games Federation (CGF), the organisation responsible for conducting the global commonwealth sports event.

- ✓ It means that the medals won at these two championships will be officially counted in the overall medals tally of the Birmingham Games
- ✓ The Chandigarh events are scheduled to be staged in January 2022, while the Birmingham Games are scheduled to take place from July 27-August 7, 2022.
- ✓ Chandigarh and Birmingham events will be treated as two separately organised and funded Commonwealth multi-sport meets
- ✓ The CGF will issue an “aggregated and consolidated” medals table of the Birmingham 2022, a week after the closing ceremony of the CWG
- ✓ The consolidated medals table will include results from the Chandigarh Commonwealth archery and shooting championships
- ✓ The proposal to host shooting and archery championships in India was formally submitted by the Indian Olympic Association (IOA) to the CGF last month.
- ✓ India had announced to boycott the event in protest over shooting's exclusion, a threat which was later dropped by IOA at its December 30 annual general meeting.

